1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
SI4 Abipon SI4

If you do not instantly obey my friendly admonitions, it will be worse for you. Henceforward, you shall not go unpunished. Know, that as soon as ever I hear of any act of superstition or indecency committed or attempted by you, at my orders you shall be led about the streets amidst the hisses of the people, and pelted with cow-dung, by a crowd of boys. Such is my firm determination. This is the thyme and frankincense that shall be offered up to the stinking divinity, which you have madly dared to arrogate to yourself and suffered to be adored." This commination left the old fellow alarmed, and, if I mistake not, corrected, all good men highly approving the severity of my speech. No suspicions were ever after entertained of him, though I inspected all things with a vigilant eye and an attentive ear.

As the jugglers perform the offices not only of soothsayers and physicians, but also of priests of the ceremonies of superstition, it exceeds belief what absurd opinions they inculcate into the ignorant minds of the Abipones. Out of many, I will mention a few. The Abipones think that none of their nation would ever die, were the Spaniards and the jugglers banished from America; for they attribute every one's death, from whatever cause it may proceed,

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
814 Abipon 314
CHIQUITO SF9

A 756 either to the malicious arts of the one, or to the fire-arms of the other. If an Abipon die from being pierced with many wounds, or from having his bones broken, or his strength exhausted by extreme old age, his countrymen all deny that wounds or weakness occasioned his death, and anxiously try to discover by which of the jugglers, and for what reason he was killed. Because they have remembered some of their nation to have lived for a hundred years, they imagine that they would never die, were it not for the jugglers and the Spaniards. What ridiculous ideas do not the Americans entertain respecting the eclipse of the sun and moon! During the time it lasts, the Abipones fill the air with horrid lamentations. They perpetually cry *tayretà!* oh! the poor little thing! grieving for the sun and moon: for when these planets are obscured, they always fear that they are entirely extinguished. Still more ridiculous are the Chiquito Indians, who say that the sun and moon are cruelly torn by dogs, with which they think that the air abounds, when they see their light fail; attributing their blood red colour to the bites of these animals. Accordingly, to defend their dear planets from those aërial mastiffs, they send a shower of arrows up into the sky, amid loud vociferations,

• 761 A 756 754 761 A 821 C 821 [772]

827 replies with a groan, it is in my heart: so that it is very difficult to understand from the Indians what their complaint is, and where it is situated, unless it be betrayed by other signs. Loathing
753 of food for ever so short a time is, in their
827 opinion, a certain indication of sickness. If an Abipon, from having overloaded his stomach, abstains from food for a little while, the women immediately augur the worst respecting him, and make no end of their lamentations, saying every now and then with a groan, *Chik rkeñe*, he does not eat. As soon as the sick person takes ever so little food, though the disorder be not yet subdued, they think him out of danger, so that *Là rkeñe*, he eats now; and *Là-yamini*, or *Là natatéuge*, now he is recovered, now he revives, are with them synonimous.
[164] Moreover, as the Abipones are but very seldom
165 sick, so very few of them die when they are sick. I do not doubt but that in the frequent conflicts they have with enemies and tigers, numbers fall yearly by the nails of the one, and the claws of the other. In most of the remainder, extreme old age is generally the fatal dis-
[165] ease. In a word, greatest part of the Abi-
761 pones die when they are satiated with life, when, weary of the burden of years, they long for death as the rest and solace of their miserable existence. This circumstance occasions

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
SI4 Abipon SI4

the common error that they should never die at all were the Spaniards and the jugglers banished from America; for, to the arms of the former, and to the arts of the latter, they attribute the deaths of all their countrymen. A wound inflicted with a spear often gapes so wide that it affords ample room for life to go out and death to come in; yet if the man dies of the wound, they madly believe him killed, not by a weapon, but by the deadly arts of the jugglers. The relations leave no stone unturned, not only diligently to investigate, but severely to punish the authors of the death, and of the sorcery. They are persuaded that the juggler will be banished from amongst the living, and made to atone for their relation's death, if the heart and tongue be pulled out of the dead man's body immediately after his decease, roasted at the fire, and given to dogs to devour. Though so many hearts and tongues are devoured, and they never observe any of the jugglers die, yet they still religiously adhere to the custom of their ancestors, by cutting out the hearts and tongues of infants and adults of both sexes, as soon as they have expired. How firmly this mad notion, that men are killed by magical arts alone, is rooted in the minds of the Abipones, you may learn from the following facts, of which I myself was a spectator. In the

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
SI4 Abipon SI4

colony of St. Ferdinand, a Yaaucaniga, famed amongst his countrymen both for high birth and military prowess, and on that very account ready for any audacious action, was much afflicted at the untimely death of his little daughter. He knew that she had been weak and diseased from her birth, yet was fully bent upon finding out the magical author of her death. A foreign Indian woman married to an Abipon appeared to him, from the representations of certain old women, who bore her a grudge, to be the perpetrator of the crime. Infuriated by the supposed injury, and the desire of vengeance, he fell upon the innocent unsuspecting woman at the approach of night, as she was spinning at the fire; he pierced her shoulder-blade with a spear with such force, that the point came out in the middle of her bosom, and stained the child she was suckling with its mother's blood. The woman was middle-aged, very fat, and full-breasted. She swam in her own blood, which spouted from every vein. The horrid nature of the wound threatening certain death, the heads of our holy religion, which she had formerly learnt, were briefly recalled to her memory; she received baptism, and was admonished to forgive her murderer. Having thus attended to the salvation of the poor woman's soul, we applied all our thoughts towards retarding her death,

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
514 Abipon 514

752 237 curing wounds; let them laugh, deride, doubt and despise, with my hearty good-will. I confidently oppose the experience of my own eyes, to their doubts and laughter. My arm, which was pierced with an arrow armed with five barbs, by the Natakebit savages, the nerve which directs the middle finger being injured at the same time, was happily cured in fourteen days by this remedy alone. With this fat I have cured men wounded both with arrows and spears; and with the same remedy I entirely healed an Abiponian woman whose leg had been wounded by an axe, in consequence of which, as all medicine had for some days been neglected, the foot was swelled in a dreadful manner. It would be endless to relate all the cures that have been worked with hen's fat.

754 [761] The jugglers are commonly thought to be the authors of diseases, as well as of death, and the sick Abipones imagine that they shall recover as soon as ever those persons are removed. A tragic event will render this foolish persuasion more undoubted. An Abipon of the town of St. Jeronymo, called Ychohàke, elevated by the memory of his own great deeds, and those of his brother, the Cacique Ychoalay, wasted away with a slow disease. It never entered his head to seek the cause in the noxious humours in which he abounded. To

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
SI4 Abipon SI4

lighted much in the presence of the priest, whom, as he came in the early part of the night, he persuaded to repose for a while at his own house, promising to let him know when he felt his death approach. He kept his word: he calmly expired the night before Trinity Sunday, whilst the priest was suggesting every thing consolatory to the dying man, and his relations were all weeping around him. He caused us to entertain great hopes of his obtaining a happy immortality on many accounts. For, indignant at the lamentations of his weeping domestics, he said they should remember he was going to visit the great house of the Creator of all things, the high father, the greatest captain. Ever intent on appeasing the Almighty, he testified sorrow and remorse for the many murders he had committed, of Christians and others. He repeatedly desired his wife not to follow the custom of their ancestors in slaying his horses and sheep at his grave; leaving them, and all his other property, to his little daughter. All this manifests that he held his ancient superstitions in abhorrence, and had embraced Christianity with his whole soul. I have related this to show you that all the misery resulting from deaths and disorders is attributed by the Abipones to the magical

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
514 Abipon 514

754 arts of the jugglers; whom, nevertheless, at
756 other times they revere as physicians and
761 saviours, of which more hereafter. Much remains to be said of diseases which ought not to be unknown to Europe.

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
SI4 Abipon SI4

sailors and ships. They look upon their wounds without a groan, and with as much indifference as they would upon those of another person. They are acquainted with all those arts which every European soldier admires, but which so very few practise. This alone is unknown to the Abipones, to despise death, and gain glory by encountering danger. They boast of martial souls, but are too unwilling to resign their lives. They are active, but can by no means be called brave, for a brave man would remain unterrified were the globe itself to fall in ruins, and would choose either to conquer or die. The Abipones always desire to conquer, but are never willing to die. They will curse a victory obtained at the expense of one of their countrymen's lives. They abhor triumphal hymns if mingled with funeral lamentations, and would reject a victory accompanied by the sighs of one mourning widow or orphan.

Certainly no one can accuse the Abipones of rashness in venturing their lives. Their chief adorations are paid to the goddess Security, the arbitress of their battles, without whose approving sanction they will never risk an engagement. They carefully avoid a contest of uncertain issue. They always threaten others, always fear for themselves, and trust nothing to chance. Before they undertake a warlike

1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
S14 Abipon S14

kalipl; at which the auditors burst forth into an exclamation of *Ndře*, by which they express a strange and unheard-of thing. Having minutely recounted every circumstance tending to set forth this arduous fight and splendid victory, he proceeds to discover those of his fellow-soldiers that have been wounded in the battle. At every name the by-standers groan, and utter the word *Tayretà!* Poor little thing! As the Abipones think it a crime to utter the name of a dead person, the narrator makes use of a paraphrase, thus, *Yoalè eknam oanerma Hamelèn laneuek là chit kaekà:* The man, the husband of the woman Hamelèn, is now no more. The mention of the death of one of their countrymen entirely destroys all the pleasure which the news of the victory had excited; so that the announcer immediately finds himself deserted by his late attentive listeners, as soon as ever he begins to touch upon this melancholy subject. All the women unloose their hair, snatch up gourds and drums, and lament in the manner that I have described in the twenty-fourth chapter.

The Abipones, when returned from an expedition, enter their horde, not in one company, but separately, without ostentation, if victorious, and without signification of sorrow, if conquered, or even if desperately wounded, un-